



City of Hartford

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **HARTFORD HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AND SEVEN FAMILY CENTERS TO RECEIVE \$ 200,000 EACH FOR NEW INITIATIVE OF THE CT CHILDREN TRUST FUND**

#### **MANY FAMILIES TO BENEFIT FROM THE EXPANSION OF THE NURTURING FAMILIES NETWORK**

The Nurturing Families Network, a program that assists high-risk, first-time parents with the challenges of parenthood, will expand from three to 11 sites in Hartford in January 2005, thanks to \$1.8 million in increased state funding and further support from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

The landmark expansion of the Network, a State of Connecticut Children's Trust Fund program, will provide intensive home visiting parenting services to nearly three of every four first-born children in Hartford at risk for abuse and/or neglect. It is hoped that the program will boost the city and state's ongoing efforts to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect, build healthy, nurturing environments for children and help prepare them future success.

"With this landmark expansion of the Nurturing Families Network in Hartford, we hope to provide intensive home visiting services to 70 percent of the first-born children in the city at risk for abuse or neglect," said Karen Foley-Schain, executive director of the Children's Trust Fund. "We are so pleased to partner with Mayor Perez's Passport to Success program, the City's Department of Health and Human Services, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the many city programs and agencies now part of our Network to provide this invaluable service to Hartford's young parents and children."

**"School readiness is a critical issue and preventive programs such as the Nurturing Families Network address this issue while promoting safe environments for our children," said Mayor Perez. "I'd like to thank the Children's Trust Fund, Senator Harp, Representative**

**Thompson, Representative Farr and the Hartford Foundation for making a real difference in the lives of Hartford families.”**

“This is smart money,” said State Senator Toni Harp (D-New Haven), who along with Rep. Jack Thompson (D-Manchester) and Rep. Bob Farr (R-West Hartford) played a key role in passing the funding legislation. “If we can prevent child abuse and teach young parents how to nurture their children through intensive intervention, what we are really doing is creating a community for generations to come.”

Bolstering the state aid is a three-year, \$429,000 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving’s Brighter Futures Initiative. Seven of the eight new Hartford sites are Brighter Futures Family Centers. **The eighth site is the City’s Maternal Infant and Outreach Program (MIOP), a cornerstone of Mayor Eddie Perez’ Passport to Success program. MIOP will also work in coordination with the City’s Adolescent and Parenting Development Program.**

“Families in Hartford will be the real winners in this collaboration,” said Michael Bangser, president of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. “Connecting Nurturing Families staff with family centers gives parents a comfortable, known place to go right in their neighborhood – a place where they can receive other valuable services for themselves and their children.”

Of the approximately 2,200 children born in Hartford each year, some 800 are first-born children, including 500 in low-income households at risk for child abuse and neglect. Nearly 50 percent of first-born children, and 70 percent of first-born/at-risk children, will be served by the Hartford expansion.

Working with residents throughout city neighborhoods, the Nurturing Families Network engages and supports 5,000 parents each year before their first child is born through intensive home visiting, group-based parent education and information/support.

“We are so pleased to bring these additional services to Hartford’s young parents and children” says Ramon Rojano, Director of Health and Human Services. “Our department has had a long history of working with children and their families, along with other agencies. However, this new program is expected to become a national model of service integration and high outcomes”.

Besides MIOP, the following seven Family Centers in the city will also receive funding:

- Asylum Hill Beat the Street/Catholic Charities
- LIFE Family Center/Liberty International Family and Educational Services
- El Centro de Desarrollo y Reafirmacion Familiar, Catholic Charities
- Parkville Family Center/Family Life Education
- RAMBUH Family Center/Village for Families and Children
- Southside Family Center/Village for Families and Children
- Trust House Family Center

See attached brochure for more details: [Nurturing Families Network](#)